Hike in Steel Prices

5499. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether major steel producers have deferred their production due to across-the-board hike in steel prices;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Tata Steel and SAIL have also announced to hike the prices of steel; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to curb the prices of steel ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) to (c) Due to increase in prices of petroleum products and railway freight the main producers of steel, namely : Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) and Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO) have recently revised their prices in August, 1996. However, the main producers have not deferred their production on account of revision of prices.

(d) After de-regulation of pricing and distribution of steel the Government has no role in revision of prices. Main steel producers are themselves fixing prices of their various products, keeping in view input costs and the prevailing market conditions.

However, Government have taken various measures which will help in ensuring that steel products are made available to the consumers at competitive prices. Some of these measures are :

(i) Modernisation and expansion of public sector steel plants have been taken up and creation of additional steel production capacities in the private sector is being encouraged and facilitated. Higher availability of steel from a larger number of steel producers is expected to have a moderating influence on steel prices;

(ii) Reduction of customs duty on imports of raw materials for the steel industry and also on import of capital goods has helped in reducing the production cost of steel manufacturers;

(iii) Import of steel is freely allowed; and

(iv) Reduction of customs duties on import of steel products has reduced the landed cost of imports.

P. F. Contribution

5500. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the total PF contribution has been deposited with PF Commissioner by the M/s. Wings Wear (P) Ltd. New Delhi for the period from August, 1995 to July, 1996;

(b) if so, whether the deposited amount has been credited to the account of the employees;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken by the Governemnt against the Company ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Provident Fund money is required to be credited into the account of the employees as and when the same is deposited in the Fund by the employer. As M/s Wings Wear Ltd., has failed to deposit PF dues, the same could not be credited into the accounts of the employees.

(d) Necessary legal and penal action as provided under Section 7A of the EPF & M.P. Act and also under Section 406/409 of the IPC have been initiated to recover the dues outstanding against the defaulting establishment.

Speed Post Service in Karnataka

5501. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR :
SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have not provided adequate number of Speed Post Collection Centres in Karnataka and West Bengal;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to expand this facility during 1996-97 in the above States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No Sir, there are adequate number of Speed Post Collection Centres provided in Karnataka and West Bengal on the basis of potentiality and operational feasibility.

(b) Does not arise in view of the reply at (a) above.

(c) and (d) Government has taken a policy of consolidating the existing network of Speed Post instead of its unbridled expansion. A city is brought under National Network of Speed Post only when there is sufficient traffic to make it financially viable and operationally feasible.

Commercial Ties

5502. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the foreign airlines with which Air India has established commercial ties;